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Of Our Latin America Staff

The 1,182 men captured in the ill-starred Cuban invasion will accept whatever penalty awaits them and not seek an appeal, a prominent exile leader reported Friday.

It was further learned by The Herald:

**THE PLIGHT** of the captives may be placed before the United Nations by the Dominican Republic representative.

**U.S. OFFICIALS** have unofficially told Cuban refugee chiefs that Washington can do nothing for the prisoners at this time.

The luckless invaders stood trial for the second day in a basketball court at El Principe Prison in Havana, where they have been held since their surrender after the Bay of Pigs invasion last April.

Fidel Castro again ordered the proceedings to be conducted in the strictest secrecy. But Havana radio, the unofficial mouthpiece of the regime, announced that the prisoners had "admitted their guilt."

The announcer also indicated that the trial would be brief and a decision handed down soon by khaki-clad, five-man military tribunal.

The exile leader said the prisoners had decided to stick together to the end and are willing to accept their fate, whatever comes.

He said that word the prisoners would not appeal the judgment rendered against them had been carried out of Havana.

More than two of the prisoners had pleaded guilty and offered a full confession.

Dr. Jose Antonio de Cespedes, one of the members of the Cuban Council of State, said Friday that the Cuban government plans to appeal the prisoners' guilty verdicts.

The world, it is apparently would be asked, to assure that the anti-Castro fighters were given a fair trial and protected under the Geneva conference covering treatment of prisoners of war.

When asked about the report that the prisoners pleaded guilty, Miro Cardona replied, "If they are accused of going to Cuba to fight, that's true."

Both Miro Cardona and Varona have sons among the accused prisoners.

The feeling among Cuban refugees everywhere was one of admiration for the prisoners, who openly admitted to trying to overthrow Castro, the bearded revolutionist who now holds their fate in his hands.

Meanwhile, a Washington source disclosed that Richard Goodwin, deputy assistant secretary of state for Inter-American affairs, had conferred with a group of Cuban exiles seeking U.S. intervention on behalf of the prisoners.

Goodwin reportedly told the exiles that the administration could not do anything at this time for the prisoners which might involve the U.S.

He was further quoted as saying the U.S. could not afford to incur another mistake, like its revealed participation in the Bay of Pigs invasion.

Goodwin, however, indicated that the U.S. was quietly asking other governments

to use their influence on the Cuban government, the source said.

Although there were no eyewitness accounts coming out of the trial, bits of information leaked out.

It was reported that the prisoner-defendants were individually asked by the court to state their plea.

Each, in turn, spoke out, "I have nothing to say."

The Cuban government an-

noted that the court heard a confession allegedly written by Capt. Jose Perez San Roman, military commander of the invasion operation.

The letter supposedly said the invasion participants were "naive" and "foolish" if "they thought they were coming ashore to save Cuba."

The letter, dated May 10, 1961, less than a month after the assault, was purportedly delivered to Castro the next day.

Throughout the hearing, the prosecutor hammered home the accusation the prisoners were "mercenaries" at the service of "U.S. imperialists."

Although there has been no official confirmation, it is expected that the military commanders of the invasion will be judged separately from the remainder of the prisoners.



Dr. Cubas

... prosecutor



Dr. Antonio Cejas

... defense counsel